

Application No. 09/546,549

### REMARKS

Claims 1 – 103 are pending in the above-referenced application. Claims 1-3, 5-6, 8-27, 29-49, 72-75, 80, and 82-94 are rejected. Claims 4, 7, 28, 76-79, and 81 are objected to. Claims 50-71 and 95-103 are allowed. Claims 4, 7, 28, 76, 77, and 81 have been cancelled without prejudice. Claims 1, 5, 25, 72, and 73 have been amended. Accordingly, claims 1-3, 5-6, 8-27, 29-75, 78-80, and 82-103 are under consideration in the instant application.

Rejection of claims 1-3, 5-6, 8-27, 29-49, 72-75, 80, and 82-94 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

Claims 1-3, 5-6, 8-27, 29-49, 72-75, 80, and 82-94 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bark (U.S. Patent No. 5,772,644). According to the Office, Bark discloses the claimed invention except for a fold in the membrane. The Office concludes it would have been obvious to combine the fold disclosed in Figure 10 of the '644 patent with the membrane disclosed in Figures 1-3.

The Office has indicated claims 4, 7, 28, 76-79, and 81 would be allowable if re-written in independent form. Applicants have cancel claims 4, 7, 28, 76-79, and 81 and incorporated their respective limitations into the independent claim from which they depend. Accordingly, the rejected independent claims are now in condition for allowance as well as the various claims that depend from the allowable independent claims.

The applicants believe that their claims are in good and proper form and are patentable over the cited art. As such, the applicants respectfully request reconsideration, allowance of the claims and passage of the case to issuance.

Respectfully submitted,



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